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paintings, prints, ceramics, textiles, oriental, classical and Egyptian collections. To supplement this work we have arranged recently a rotary exhibition of photographs of works of art in the Museum which is sent to the various school buildings of the city. It is shown in each for two weeks, the exhibition being opened by a talk on the collection. There is left with it a type-written historical and critical sketch of the paintings prepared with the needs of the child in view. The success of this plan has been so great that several exhibitions will be organized next year.

There are two or three ideas that our work in Toledo has brought forcibly to my mind. One is, that it is better to create in the future college student a strong demand for courses in art than to insert into the curriculum of every college and university in America a required course in art. A college art course should first give the student a love for and appreciation of art. Next it should prepare him to acquire technical knowledge, for few students become critics or artists, while all build homes, shops, parks, and cities—and it is as wrong to attempt any of these things without a knowledge of art as it is to practice medicine without a license. Art education is a great subject. College art education is an important phase of it. But the roots of the nation's art appreciation lie deeper than the college. It is well to prune the branches and protect the trunk, but we must not forget to take proper care of the roots and enrich the soil.

The Value of the Study of Art in our Institutions of Higher Education:  
J. C. DANA, *Public Library, Newark, N. J.*

Note of explanation: The President of the College Art Association, Mr. John Pickard of the University of Missouri, asked me in January of this year to take part in a discussion of this subject at the annual meeting of the Association in the Metropolitan Museum, March 28, 29 and 30. I told him that for reasons which need not be given here I would not be able to do this. But I added that if he wished I would write a brief note on the subject, print it and distribute it to members before the meeting. He approved of my suggestion; and here is the note.

Newark, N. J. March 12, 1918

J. C. D.

The subject for discussion raises this question:

“If college students study in the proper manner the proper aspect or phase of a subject called Art, what will the human race gain thereby?”

That one may give an intelligent answer to this question—not necessarily the one right answer, but an answer which means something—he must first clearly define the aspect of Art he selects for his purpose; then he must describe the manner in which he thinks the aspect of Art he selects should be studied; and then he must show how he thinks this procedure will profit mankind.

This brief analysis discloses some of the reasons why nearly all talk about Art is quite futile. It is because it defines nothing; lays down no clearly stated, easily understood thesis; and uses words and phrases which arouse agreeable emotions and are therefore, but quite erroneously, assumed to lead to satisfying conclusions. Art discussions usually furnish pleasurable reactions to the mentally befogged.

To clear the ground before I attack the subject in hand, let me give some of the conclusions I have dared to reach:—

(1) There are no principles of art. By this I mean that from a study of what are accepted by notable critics as objects of art—from a Japanese print to a Greek temple—there can be drawn no rules or laws or principles which will enable one to produce an object which these same notable critics will declare to be art.

(2) There is no field of art. By this I mean that it is impossible to divide the agreeable reactions, the reactions which lie in the pleasure field of the human animal, into two parts and say of one of them, all the responses to stimuli in this part are esthetic and are art, subjectively considered, while all others are merely raw feeling. To illustrate, we cannot say of our response to an apple pie that it is merely carnal, and of our response to a Corot that it is inevitably esthetic.

(3) Beauty has no relation to Age, Rarity or Cost. By this I mean that the pleasurable emotions aroused in one by knowledge of the facts that an object he is

looking at is very old, very rare and has been exchanged for a great deal of money, have no relation whatever—save that of the evil companions of a good child—to the pleasurable reactions produced by the qualities of the object in question.

(4) Patronage is the mother of art. By this I mean that great designers and fine craftsmen have always come forward when the rewards of general esteem, personal recognition and a living wage have asked them to come. And, by way of an illustration by contrariety, I refer to the fact that our museums of art are patrons of archaeologists, excavators and importers, but not of actual or potential good designers and fine craftsmen of this country.

(5) An object of art is a permanent possibility of an agreeable thrill. As pleasant reactions are possible to all men, and as the objects which can arouse pleasant reactions are just as varied as are the nature and degree of cultivation of men, it follows that almost any conceivable thing can be, and is, to some one an object of art. That is to say, you can no more properly declare of a given thing that it is or is not an art object than, as previously stated, you can declare, of a given pleasurable emotion, that it is esthetic and not merely raw feeling.

These statements I venture to call axiomatic.

Returning to the subject, let me remind you that students do not come to college with minds like sheets of white paper. They have lived about 19 years and have been treated intermittently by teachers for about 12 of the 19. This treatment has included for most of them what we call art instruction. Our teachers, though they differ greatly on many points, agree on a few things that their art instruction ought to do; and observers and critics as well as teachers agree that it does them fairly well. One of the things it does is to test the tastes and the talents of all pupils. I mean by this that it makes almost every pupil between the years of 5 and 19, find answers to questions like these:—

Have I a talent for drawing?

Do I like to draw so much that, whether I have a gift for it or not, I will insist on practicing it until I can draw well?

Have I a talent for the use of color?

Do I like color so much that I will go on studying it and thinking about it?

Have I native skill in arrangement of masses and lines, that is, designing?

Do I like to look at and to think about any of the many kinds of things that our teachers call art products, —from a tea-spoon to a Rembrandt painting, from a Chippendale chair to a County Court-house?

The fact that to these questions the answers are almost invariably "no" is not what I wish chiefly to bring out. I ask you to note that formal education has probably brought to light, before they enter college, all the talent, affection and discriminating power, lying in the fields of design, color and decoration, that any college students may possess. Therefore, it is not necessary to test the college student again for tastes and talents in what we call arts by courses in technique.

Let me now remind you that in the discussion of any aspect of education this fact should be always kept in mind, that to the making of a man nature contributes 75 to 90 per cent and nurture, meaning all after-birth influence, between 10 and 25 per cent.

Returning again to our topic, I now state what I mean by art for the purpose of this discussion.

Man has added a little to his pleasures, for say, 10,000 years, by adding a certain superfluity of what seemed to him a prettiness to the things he made. In these latter days we sometimes call this adding process "doing art," and the pleasures we take in the thing when done we call "art appreciation."

I can now give you my statement of the essence of a proper teaching and study of art in our colleges. And I affirm it to be, not befogged by the emotional content of words; and to harmonize with the limited scope of formal education, with the dominance of the gifts or withholdings of nature, with the non-existence

of esthetic principles and with the dependence on patronage of the development of the power of "doing art." My definition of the proper art study, that is, conforms to the axioms I presented.

This then is what may safely be said by a teacher to a student of art in an institution of higher learning:—

"You have noted that many persons of cultivation and intelligence get pleasure from looking at and discussing what they call art objects, and also the useful objects to which has been added a certain superfluity of prettiness which they call decoration. You will see more of this as you grow older, learn more and meet cultivated people more often. The pleasure derived from this practise seems to be very great and we may say deep and fine.

"You are preparing yourselves for a life of hard work. Most of you will never have much of the leisure wealth permits. You must snatch bits of pleasure as you go along. The pleasure you can get from the practise of looking at, thinking about and talking about this superfluity of life will cost you almost nothing in money and little more than odd moments of your time. In the four years you are here a few of us, your teachers, are going to induce as many of you as possible to observe these superfluities, to get interested in them, to compare them, to find fault with them and to think and talk about them.

"We shall begin to-day by looking for a few moments at the paneled door which opens into this room."

The teacher then asks them—the example is selected to fit with my whole thesis—to note the door's proportions, the relations of the panels to the whole door and to one another, the quality, purpose and history of the moldings about the panels, the color of the door and the relation of that color to the rest of the room, the quality of workmanship shown in the door's construction, and to other like points.

From the door he may go, on other occasions, to other things,—shoe, pocket-knife, chair, print, book,

rug, window, cornice, building, painting, carving, piece of sculpture, or what not. He will refrain from saying a thing is beautiful or is "true art." He will avoid the patter of current esthetics. He will approach very cautiously art's moral influence. He will not hypnotize himself with word-combinations like "The True, the Beautiful and the Good." He will repeat often the substance of his opening remarks, thus,

"It seems that the cultivation of an interest in the superfluity of what some call prettiness adds zest to life; such cultivation will be likely to add daily and almost hourly to the pleasures of most persons of intelligence." And he will say that in every country a certain very, very small per cent of the population find happiness in trying to add to things this superfluous somewhat which you, the students, are learning to find of interest; and that the only way in which any people have ever acquired good superfluities of prettiness of their own—and any given people's own seems to bring to that people more pleasure than do the superfluities of other peoples—is to be interested in, look at, think of, talk about, and praise, and blame, and buy and pay for the superfluously pretty products of the very few of their fellows who love to produce them.

If you have read the proceedings of your last meeting, you will find that I have said many of the things therein set down. And in view of my remarks you will understand why I find that most of the good things in that volume lose much of their value because they are accompanied by meaningless talk about fundamental principles and the laws that govern art; about the impossibility of appreciating art except through a study of Great Art; about those brothers of Confusion and offspring of Giant Despair, "Harmony, Balance and Rhythm;" about spiritual verities, and many other vague ejects of the art-enraptured soul. And you will see why I find a certain snobbishness in the assumption of esthetic holiness acquired by "Extensive European travel"—which was denied, by the way, to Korin, Praxiteles and some others—and by association with notorious and costly objects in museums and in galleries of the rich.

My approval, or my disapproval, of the activities of this association counts for little. But I wish to go on record as finding its very existence a hopeful sign and its activities full of promise of good results. For nearly a quarter of a century I have looked almost in vain for a spark of interest and a scrap of knowledge concerning prints—to mention only one form of the superfluities we are discussing—in graduates of our colleges. Until interest and knowledge of that type are quite commonly given to college students we shall continue to see the admirable art work of our schools decline to a mere shadow as it approaches our college gates, and quite disappear as it passes through them.

New Brunswick, N. J.  
March 26, 1918.

John Cotton Dana, Esq.,  
Newark, New Jersey.

Dear Dana:—The chances are that I shall not be able to attend the meeting of the College Art Association at the Metropolitan on March 29. I am busy, and have your excuse of not being very well; but neither of those pleas prevents an interest in your printed note on "The Value of the Study of Art in our Institution of Higher Education," which you are good enough to send me. It is a whole generation of perversity in itself, or would be if one did not recognize the whimsical in it. Perhaps you will not mind if I answer it in kind. Between us we may succeed, like Brer Fox, in "muddyin' up de drinkin' water" though if I read you aright you think the spring is already so muddy that no one can see anything.

Well, there is some truth in that. There is considerable muddiness. You think it is because talk about art "defines nothing; lays down no clearly stated, easily understood thesis; and uses words and phrases which arouse agreeable emotions, and are therefore, but quite erroneously, assumed to lead to satisfying conclusions." Now I think just the opposite. It is the definition and the staked premises that tie one up or pin one down. People start out with them and seek confirmation for them in art. If they do not find confirmation the art is wrong and not their definition. Why



the necessity for binding ones self with definitions? Why not go out on an expedition of inquiry, and if after many years you find and collate data that point to a conclusion or principle why then it may be worth while to formulate it; but don't get the principle first and then try to make subsequent art experience bend to it.

You say "all talk about art is quite futile," presumably because it has not been exactly defined. For "art" substitute the word "electricity" and will you contend that the talk of the professor of Electrical Engineering in, say, Stevens or Rutgers, is quite "futile" because he cannot define electricity? No one knows what it is, but does that preclude inquiry, study, use, even admiration and appreciation of it? Can't you enjoy your piece of apple pie without inquiry as to whether your response to it is carnal or esthetic? Can't you admire a fine Titian portrait without a thought of definitions or principles, esthetic or otherwise? If you were a professor of art couldn't you say something about the portrait that might be enlightening to your pupils without insisting upon its going into pocket two, box four, case six of your theory of esthetics?

"There are no principles of art" you say; and by that you mean "there can be drawn no rules or laws or principles which will enable one to produce an object which these same notable critics will declare to be art." By the same token there are no rules of prosody which will enable one to produce Homeric or Miltonic verse, therefore there is no rule or law or principle underlying Homer or Milton. They just "happened" and they just wrote. There is no principle of life because science cannot create it; there is no principle of gravity because men cannot control it; and the solar system has no constancy to law because we cannot make one like it.

Why, Dana dear, you are more iconoclastic than in the ancient days when we used to wrangle over the table at the Fortnightly. There are plenty of principles of art. Didn't I write a whole book full of them more than thirty years ago? They were a queer lot I will

admit—so queer that I suppressed the book within six months—but that was my fault. Today I talk little about principles in the class-room, not because they are non-existent, but because they confuse the young students and I can get on better without them. If I interject any talk about art principles in a consideration of a Titian portrait it is that the student may understand the portrait better and not with any idea that he could, by use of the principles, produce such portraiture. There are ten thousand things to be said about art besides discussing its principles—things that are informing, ennobling and decidedly worth while.

Your second proposition that “there is no field of art” I can agree with—that is, as you define it. There seems no necessity for its discussion, and in reality it is not so much of a field as it is a man of straw that you have set up for the purpose of knocking down. The average college professor, I venture to think, does not worry his pupils with “responses to stimuli” from either apple pies or Corot landscapes. If he does he is a donkey and should have his shoes pulled off and be turned out to grass. Psychological analysis is right enough in a treatise on the emotions, but the professor of art in the American college usually has a raw youth on his hands who perhaps does not know the difference between a frieze and a capital, and needs first aid to the ignorant instead of the last word in psychology. He does not know that he has any emotions and has only a vague consciousness of a brain. One can talk at his supposed brain for four consecutive college years and make little enough impression upon it; if one should talk at his emotions heaven only knows what would be the result. I never ran any such risk.

That “Beauty has no relation to Age, Rarity and Cost” is an elementary proposition that everyone will accept only—I wonder how you dared to make such a proposition without defining what you mean by “beauty.” I never use the word in the class-room. It means anything or nothing as the user of it sees fit and in the end proves only a stumbling block. It is one of those inventions of the theorist and philosopher

that keeps arising at every turn to plague its inventor. The theory, history, and practice of art can get on very well without a blessed thought about beauties or reals or ideals. I agree with you that talk about them is "futile," but so far as I can ascertain there is very little discussion of them in the class-room.

There is some mental curiosity about the age, rarity, and cost of a work of art, but I doubt your intimation that either professor or student gets an emotional kick out of them. Some foolish people regard age as synonymous with quality, but the foolish person is in all ranks and professions, and belongs not to the body of art professors alone. Attribution, again, is something that people are mentally curious about, but everyone knows that it has not to do with the work of art as art. It makes no difference whether Raphael or Guilio Romano painted the altar-piece, or Chippendale or Sheraton made the chair. The question is: Is it a good altar-piece or a good chair? I am radical enough to go even further and throw out the subject, saying, that it makes no difference whether Raphael paints a Madonna, a Psyche, or a pope's portrait, for the art of it lies in the manner of doing rather than in the theme. A great workman will do any theme, any kind of work, with approximately equal skill or art—certainly with an intelligence of a quality peculiar to all his work.

I can differ with you again over your fourth proposition that "Patronage is the mother of art." The annals of painting, sculpture, poetry, music, are full of illustrations showing art produced without patronage and in spite of it. All the rebels have fought for their ideas through poverty and non-recognition. Names by the dozens will occur to every one. If you will consult again Whistler's "Ten O'clock" he will tell you that art crops up independent of time or race or people, and there is some truth underlying that exaggeration. At the same time you are measurably right in saying that "the rewards of general esteem, personal recognition and a living wage" have brought forth art at different periods.

The illustration you deduce from your axiom ("Patronage is the mother of art") that our museums

of art patronize the archeologists, excavators, and importers is true enough. Why shouldn't they? From what other source can they get materials for exhibition? Your counter illustration that museums do not help "actual or potential good designers and fine craftsmen of this country" is not so true as I wish it were. The museums of the country turn too many of our designers and craftsmen into imitative monkeys, who keep making flat copies of things that have no relation to this country and no pertinence in our life. We are the imitators of all times and peoples and fail to see the absurdity of a Greek temple doing service as a Stock Exchange, a Roman arch as a Clearing House, and a Renaissance *palazzo pubblico* as a printing shop. A sky-scraper such as Cass Gilbert's West Street Building in New York is worth a dozen such blatant make-overs. The sky-scraper is our own, fills a need in a new and original way, and is right, true, and honest in every respect. But we merely scoff at it. Just so with any proper or pertinent design that might be made for the furnishing of our homes and houses. We prefer something that is "Empire" or "Renaissance" or "Moorish" or "Japanese," and the designer is sent to the museum to see that he gets the exact pattern of stuff or rug or chair or table. What is the result? The interiors of our houses remind one of any and all styles except our own. If the interior is new you have the feeling that it was built for exhibition purposes; if it is old there is the feeling of the junk shop about it. Where does the feeling of an American home come in?

I am old fogey enough to believe that our museums should be primarily designed to illustrate the culture—history of the race, and, secondarily, to furnish mental profit and pleasure, if you please, to the casual person who enjoys and profits by seeing what others have done as he enjoys and profits by reading what others have written. As a collection of patterns for the exploitation of Fifth Avenue architects, designers, and furnishers, it fulfills only a commercial purpose and exalts a bedizened and bedevilled copy above a perhaps worthy home original. Such practice may make a people superficially learned in all the styles of the past, but it will

never make the native artist or lead to an appreciation of native art. The imitator has never been more than a parrot; and the art imitation is just as wearisome as the parrot's squawk. Sooner or later they both go out of the window with a crash.

"An object of art is a permanent possibility of an agreeable thrill"—that is your number five. I don't know that a thrill is the be-all and end-all of art. It never occurred to me that the galleries of Europe were places where I got merely "thrills" from day to day. There were expressive, decorative, illustrative, technical, material problems worked out there that interested me as facts; there were questions of school and period and influence and masters equally interesting; there were points of view, ways of looking at things, individual utterances, personal peculiarities quite as absorbing. I suppose I got some sort of a reaction out of each of these features but I never gauged the art by the amount of "thrill" in it. That would be a rather uncertain criterion to go by. And I would not know the difference between that thrill and the apple pie thrill which you class as merely "raw feeling." But the point again may be suggested that in my experience I have not found the college professor of art teaching "thrills" to his class to any great extent, nor discriminating sharply between esthetic feeling and "raw feeling." That is the sort of tommy-rot usually indulged in by the young person who has accumulated what is called "a swell line of art talk" for use at pink teas.

The college professor usually teaches the history of art and archeology with casts, photographs, and slides for illustration—teaches it sequentially, proportionately, critically, just as he might teach botany or English literature. In some colleges professional courses in painting and modelling are taught, but in the average college the object of the art course is not to turn out the professional artist but to teach the fine arts merely for their cultural value. Some drawing is required in almost every art course, but the object of that again is not to give the student "thrills" or get him to "love" art or ask himself questions such as: "Have I a talent for drawing?", but to cultivate

his sense of sight. If you would see a thing in its entirety sit down and try to draw it. You then get an idea of line, light, bulk, weight, texture that you never would get from a casual inspection. If the student likes drawing and becomes an adept in it so much the better for him, but the primary object of it is to improve his seeing and consequently his comprehension.

With that same object in view I suppose college professors do call their students' attention to various objects, such, for instance, as your pannelled door. They do it to point out the rightness or wrongness of the proportion, the relations, the color. That is again, in a measure, an education of the eye. Columns, capitals, and friezes in architecture, hands, heads, and figures in sculpture and painting may be dealt with in the same way. I sometimes take my students to the window to point out to them blue shadows upon snow, or dissipated lines at noonday, or the blueness of the air at twilight. It is all education of the eye and has nothing to do with "thrills" or morbid inquiry as to whether they "like" it and think they have a "talent" for it.

You put in the mouth of a supposed art-teacher words that say: "Many persons of cultivation and intelligence get pleasure from looking at and discussing what they call art objects and also the useful objects to which has been added a certain superfluity of prettiness which they call decoration." I hardly grasp your meaning. You certainly know that a "superfluity" of anything makes bad art and that a "superfluity of prettiness" makes the worst kind of decoration imaginable. Every college professor knows that, too, and does not confuse the tying of pink bows and blue ribbons about an object with its decorative quality or its ornamentation. It is the oldest and commonest of accepted beliefs that decoration or ornamentation, if it be good, must be structural rather than superficial. Anything tacked on for mere ornament is bad. The swell and recession of an Ionic column is right decoratively and at the same time a part of the structure. It is not an added "superfluity of prettiness" but a frank recognition that a flowing line is more agreeable to the eye than a straight one. In the same way that

Titian portrait that I have referred to may be one of the "Duchess of Urbino," dressed in gorgeous ducal garments that are decorative in the extreme, with not one thing added for "prettiness" but all of it bound up in the structure of the portrait. Any college professor who taught decoration or ornament as "an added superfluity of prettiness" should be made to face a firing squad, without benefit of clergy. But none of them teach such nonsense. Your college professor, my dear Dana, is only a dummy that you are sand-bagging by way of mental diversion.

And finally, I come to your assumption that art is taught only for "art appreciation" and its sole aim is to give "pleasure" to a bored world. I cannot agree. If the Titian portrait is only for "pleasure" why not Shakespeare and the Bible in the same category? That they all three do give "pleasure" is an added virtue, but is that their ultimate meaning for us? One can teach sculpture and painting as the graphic history of mankind—the illustration of national life, the record of the race. The walls of the Egyptian tombs are more truthful than Herodotus, a Botticelli portrait of a Medici more accurate than a description by Villari. I have the audacity to quote Ruskin to the effect that: "Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts—the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art. . . . . The acts of a nation may be triumphant by its good fortune; and its words mighty by the genius of a few of its children; but its art, only by the general gifts and common sympathies of the race." The study of any one of these autobiographies may be pleasurable but it is also cultural, informing, broadening—a part of the education which no modern should be without.

Well, I have not the time to more than suggest that the work of art may be studied as the autobiography of the individual as well as of the nation, that it may be a revelation of a mind, a point of view, a temperament, a feeling, a fine frenzy; that it may be considered as representative of an appearance, or regarded technically for its mechanical workmanship, or decoratively for its fitness for a floor or wall or ceiling. There are

scores of angles from which one can view the work of art and all of them are just as educative and as worth while as the study of geology or philosophy or science. To insist that it is merely the rich man's bauble and the object of it is to give a "thrill of pleasure" is the warped view of yellow economics and physiological psychology, plus your own perversity.

But then, Dana dear, you laid out your own premises, prepared your own axioms, and answered your own objections without, I fear, consulting with any college professor of art. You have cast a bait on the peaceful waters of the College Art Association and I have risen to it, somewhat to your amusement, I hope. You tell me that you are sending your bait to Professor Pickard and asking him to read it to the Association at its meeting on Mar. 29. Perhaps you will not mind if I send him my bite and ask him to read that, too. Possibly we will be set down as a couple of Jersey cranks, but if, as you contend, art is made to give pleasure, then art discussions ought somehow to add to the gaiety of the professorial conclave.

My best regards to you and believe me,

Very truly yours,

John C. Van Dyke

**The Value of Art Education in Colleges:** WALTER SARGENT, *Chicago*.

Testimony regarding the educational value of the arts is and always has been abundant and the Bulletin of this association has gone far in formulating this testimony and giving it publicity. The reports of this association show also that much has been accomplished in organizing methods of art instruction in colleges, so that these values are at least beginning to be realized by students and recognized by college administrators. Nevertheless in order to contribute what I might to this discussion I have made a summary of what appear to me to be the three most important values of art education although in doing so I am restating some already published.

First, the historical values, which are evident to all. Art is a projection in material form, of a wide range of emotional and intellectual experiences. It